787 difficulties, and for the fulfilment of comparatively simple wishes, recourse is taken to other methods. Fasting on a certain day in honour of a particular god or goddess for the satisfaction of a specific desire (or for overcoming a difficulty) is very common; and women take recourse to it quite often. Thus when T. was involved in a law suit, both he and his wife used to fast on Monday, and pleaded with their family god to get the court decision in their favour. Promising a food offering, sacrifice, or fasting for a specified period on a certain day, in return for the fulfilment of a wish is also resorted to. E. R.'s daughter was seriously ill and there was no hope of her life. E. R. went to the shrine of the goddess to whom her family was attached and said, 'Mother, we have always worshipped you. My daughter is on the point of death. I cannot bear to let her go before me. Save her and I will sacrifice two goats in your honour.' The girl recovered and E. R. did sacrifice the promised goats. S., a Komti woman, was worried because her daughter's husband was 'going astray'. She promised her family god: 'If you join what is breaking I shall fast on Mondays for three months and make offerings to you on all days of the fast.' The husband after a while, again started taking an interest in her daughter, and true to her word the mother kept her vow. When the wishes are not fulfilled people curse their luck, blame their own past actions, and reconcile themselves to the unfavourable attitude of the gods. 'All that we can do is to pray and worship. It is for the gods to hear or not to hear us. What else can we do? How can we have a quarrel with them?' would typify the average man's attitude in all cases where the powers of the supernatural world do not yield to their prayers and offerings.

751 176 The Muslims too have faith in ghosts and evil spirits. Their methods of dealing with them are similar to those of the Hindus. In addition they read passages from the Koran and invoke the assistance of their sages and seers. For overcoming minor ailments and difficulties they eagerly seek amulets from holy persons.

1: Dube E-5 (1951-52) 1955 AW17 Telugu AW17

178 advantages perceived, responsibilities recognized.'[1] Extending this approach to technical and organizational changes in peasant communities, we can attribute some changes in the life-ways of the people to State compulsion and legal prescription. In some spheres, particularly in material culture and technology, utility, convenience, availability and price determine to a great extent 178 the adoption of new elements and traits. The prestige factor too is 554 significant, for any externally induced or internally inspired change in the system of status evaluation brings in its wake significant modifications in the organization and life-ways of society. Innovation, variety and change for its own sake can also account for substantial variation from established norms in social behaviour at a given point of time. In a small rural community such as Shamirpet, which is situated near a big and modern city and is in everyday contact with it, the prevailing climate of opinion in social, economic and political matters in the city is bound to influence its general outlook and ways, for apart from their practical value city-ways are gradually coming to be regarded as more 'respectable' and 'progressive'.

178 So far State compulsion has been instrumental in bringing about little social and cultural change in the village community. Com- [151] pulsory vaccination as well as inoculation at the time of an epidemic appear to be the only significant measures enforced by the State which have been accepted in the everyday life of the com- [783] munity. Although untouchability has been abolished by law, in actual practice it only gives to the hitherto untouchables an equal share in public utilities, for considerations of pollution bar all effective interaction between the high and the low castes especially in the social spheres of inter-dining and inter-marriage. Symbolic as it is, this gesture of the State has nevertheless brought about a considerable modification in the inter-group attitudes between the clean and untouchable castes.

178 The factors of utility, convenience and availability have played 757 a more important role in bringing several new elements into the life of the community. Although indigenous herbs and magico-religious practices are still continued in the treatment of diseases the efficacy and utility of allopathic drugs and injections have greatly changed the attitude of the people towards modern medicine. I have pointed out earlier that they eagerly seek these

[1] Raymond Firth, *Elements of Social Organization* (London, 1951), p. 85.